651 There is proof that trade tends to grow year by year in the ease with
436 which the natives now secure the five-franc piece needed to pay their
457 tax. The Europeans who live among the Mossi, including all the riflemen and circle /an administrative district/ guards, do not put into circulation a quarter of the five-franc pieces which are required each year from the natives. At first the Mossi were taken by surprise and had to give 10, 000 or even 15, 000 cowries to obtain /62/ this famous coin, this charm, which was to free them from all difficulties with the Whites. At the official rate of exchange this coin is worth 5, 000 cowries. Nowadays it is very difficult to find a native willing to give this much for one of the coins. The usual exchange rate is from 3, 500 to 4, 000 cowries; French currency has depreciated. This must mean that the natives find elsewhere, through trading, this indispensable coin. They know that the tax must be paid every year, and instead of waiting until the last minute, as soon as they have accumulated the necessary cowries, they secure the five-franc pieces from those who have fetched them from afar. The coins flow in; the rate of exchange goes down.

439 Nowadays, trading is less active toward the north. Formerly the
567 Mossi supplied Timbuktu, the desert regions, and even Morocco with slaves. The Gourounsi and Bousansé were frequently raided with the sole intent of obtaining slaves. The Mossi even sold each other into slavery, and prior to the French occupation a woman and even more a young girl or boy did not dare venture alone a few hundred meters from the village; they were too afraid that they might not return. It is said that the Mossi even supplied the Constantinople court with eunuchs; and when the great Cardinal Lavigerie was head of the Algerian Arab Orphanage, officers once brought him small children rescued in the desert. They were very young Mossi who had been sold in Saraféré or Timbuktu and whom our officers had found enclosed in bags carried by camels in a caravan halted by our troops. These children were raised in Malta, and they returned to Mossi country where they rendered significant services. Now the establishment of an administrative center in Kaya, near the important market of Salmatenga, will no doubt promote trade in this northern region.

439 Nowadays the trade between Ouagadougou and Tenkodogo on the one hand, and Ouahigouya (in Mossi country), Saraféré, and Timbuktu or Dori (called Gyémaré by the natives) on the other hand, amounts to very little. The Mossi export kola nuts which they have brought